laning of 20 sections of National Highways, totalling to a length of about 272 kms. is in progress.

Double Laning of National Highways in Andhra Pradesh

278. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the National Highways passing through Andhra Pradesh remain single lane; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to release resources from Central Road Fund to double lane these highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) National Highways are widened to two lane out of available National Highway (Original) funds and there is no proposal at present to release resources from Central Road Fund for this purpose.

Allahabad-Haldia National Waterway

279. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Waterway Number 1 to be ready in October" which appeared in the Statesman, dated the 27th June, 2000; and

(b) if so, the latest status of Allahabad-Haldia National Waterway Number 1?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) From end June, 2 meter Least Available Depth (LAD) is available from Allahabad to Haldia on National Waterway-1. Action is also in hand to sustain the LAD.

Norms for Highways Construction Projects

280. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

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(a) whether Government are aware that norms stipulated by it to direct and World Bank funded highway construction projects are discriminatory;

(b) whether it is also a fact that pre-qualification requirements for these projects run counter to the policy guidelines formulated by Government and are leading to elimination of Indian companies as led partners; and

(c) if so, whether Government would remove this discrimination to create a level playing field thereby enabling Indian companies to play the role of lead partners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT(SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) There are different norms for pre-qualification for domestic funded and externally aided projects. The latter projects being generally much larger in size need to have more stringent criteria for experience and resources of contractors. These requirements are neither discriminatory nor contrary to Government policy. Indian companeis can become lead partners in a Joint Venture company provided they satisfy 50% of the specific pre-qualification criteria.

(c) Does not arise.

Development of NW-II

281. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Cutter Suction Dredger and Water Injection Dredgers procured for operating in NW-II;

(b) the details of amount utilised for development of NW-II during the last three years against Sector-wise allocation of Rs. 110 crores during the Ninth Five year Plan; and

(c) the sector-wise achievements made so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) So far, no dredger has been procured for operation in NW-II. However, order for procuring one Hydraulic Surface Dredger has already been placed and is expected to be ready for trials by October, 2000.

(b) and (c) 9th Plan approved outlay for IWAI is Rs. 308 crore, of which an outlay of Rs. 84 crore is earmarked for NW-II. A statement indicating scheme-